

Fitness Every Day

It's no secret that regular fitness activities are good for everyone. However, fitness can often decline as we age. Physical ailments or changes can keep us in our chairs longer, which leads to more muscle and fine motor deconditioning. The good news is that it is never too late to make a commitment to bringing fitness into your everyday life. The even better news is that May 25 is the perfect day to start your new journey – it is Senior Health and Fitness Day, a wonderful time to reenergize your commitment to getting your body up and moving daily.

Benefits of Fitness

Exercise is important to more than just the physical body for seniors. Regular fitness has been linked to [decreased depression](#) in seniors, and is often recommended as a part of a treatment regimen. Further, exercise has been studied and shown to [increase cognitive and functional brain plasticity](#), giving some hope for cognitive decline in the aging population.

But let's not forget the benefits to the physical body. Increased strength and endurance can lead to a lower risk of falling. Increased fine motor skills can lead to prolonged independence and the opportunity for seniors to age in place for longer, more safely. Exercise provides a much needed immune system boost for participants, as well as the release of endorphins which can lead to a happy mood and even better healing. What's not to love?



Bringing it to Your Life

Even with all the benefits of exercise and fitness, it can be difficult to make it a part of your life. This challenge isn't just for seniors; when is the last time that you promised yourself to start a physical regimen "next Monday"?

For seniors, exercise is best incorporated into daily life so that it becomes a routine and not a hassle. Depending on a senior's lifestyle, sometimes just performing parts of daily living tasks – buttoning a sweater, for example – can be a good way to increase range of motion slowly and surely.

Speaking of range of motion, seniors should incorporate moving their arms and legs throughout the day. This can look like arm circles while watching television or ankle rolls before standing up to answer the door. Any time you are moving the joints, it encourages flexibility and strength.

Strength and endurance, especially with the lower body, is a key part of reducing falls in the home. Seniors can work on standing up and then sitting down a few times before resting between sets. Those with better mobility can find lower body strength with daily walks, using resistance bands for exercises, or considering taking a yoga class at the local senior center.

Any movement is better than no movement, and seniors of any age can become stronger with regular exercise. [Our Visiting Angels](#) work diligently to encourage clients to get up and move, at their own unique ability, throughout the time we are in the home. Give us a call to find out how we can incorporate range of motion and strength activities into your loved one's day. Curious to find out more about exercise and seniors? [Check out our Family Resource Center](#) for insightful articles.

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